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MEC 193A

September 8, 1953

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I refer to your letter of August 17, 1953, in which you informed me of the concept under which the Joint Chiefs of Staff believe military aid to the Middle East should be administered. You requested that the Department of State set forth the political factors which should be taken into consideration by the Department of Defense in planning the execution of the first phase of the military aid program for the Middle East area.

The Chiefs of American Diplomatic Missions in the Arab States and Israel met at Cairo on August 28 and 29, together with representatives of the Department of Defense and Department of State, to discuss this question. They came to the following conclusions:

1. The $30 million appropriated by the Congress specifically for military aid to the Near East (exclusive of Greece, Turkey and Iran) should be programmed as soon as possible for assistance to Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon. If it should be decided that military grant aid to Egypt and Pakistan, or additional military grant aid to Iran, is necessary, these programs should be financed out of the sum of $50 million which has been tentatively ear-marked as reserve out of funds appropriated under Title II of the Mutual Security Act of 1953.

2. As between the countries which would share in the $30 million sum, something in the neighborhood of two-thirds of the total should be programmed for Iraq and Syria. A somewhat smaller amount, possibly in the neighborhood of $5 million, should be programmed for Saudi Arabia. A still smaller amount should be allocated for infrastructure in Israel, and token programs should be undertaken in Jordan and Lebanon.

3. Every effort should be made to initiate these programs as quickly as possible. As soon as the necessary

decisions

The Honorable
Charles E. Wilson,
Secretary of Defense.

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decisions are taken in Washington regarding the general order of magnitude of programs to be offered to each country, the American Chiefs of Mission in the area should be authorized to discuss with the governments to which they are accredited the initiation of military aid programs and, if the response of the local governments is favorable, to arrange for the dispatch of survey missions to study the exact character of the equipment and training to be furnished each country. Following the report of the survey missions, the American Diplomatic Representative in each country would then undertake formal negotiation of the usual bilateral military assistance agreement.

4. As a means of increasing American influence in the countries concerned and of giving greater assurance that the arms furnished would be used only for defense against aggression, we should seek in appropriate cases to establish formal or informal arrangements for joint military planning between the individual local governments and the United States. This was especially recommended with regard to Iraq and Syria. It was not recommended that we attempt at this time to expand this type of bilateral planning into any sort of regional multilateral planning, although in the case of Iraq close coordination and probably even tripartite planning with the British would be necessary.

I believe the foregoing recommendations are sound from a political point of view. If you concur in them, I hope the Department of Defense will take early action to lay down the general lines of military assistance to each of the countries concerned and will prepare for the early dispatch of survey teams, so that our Diplomatic Representatives may be instructed to open discussions as quickly as possible.

The Department of State will communicate with your Department at a later date regarding possible military aid programs for Egypt and Pakistan and a possible increase in the presently planned program for Iran. These will depend upon certain political factors which are not yet clear.

Sincerely yours,

s/s John Foster Dulles

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